NAXOS

TELEMANN

DDD

8.553732

Musique de Table (Tafelmusik)
Volume 4

Orchestra of the Golden Age

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)
Musique de table (Tafelmusik), Volume 4
Part III: Ouverture, Quartet, Concerto, Trio, Sonata and Conclusion

Georg Philipp Telemann was among the most distinguished composers of his time, a rival to his friend Johann Sebastian Bach in reputation, and the certain preference of the Leipzig authorities for the position of Cantor at the St Thomas Choir School, where Bach was eventually appointed in 1723. Telemann had, in 1721, taken the position of Cantor of the Johanneum in Hamburg, with musical responsibility for the five principal churches of the city. His negotiations with Leipzig a year later proved the means to secure better conditions in Hamburg, where he remained until his death in 1767. He was succeeded there by his godson Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, the second son of Johann Sebastian.

Born in Magdeburg in 1681, Telemann belonged to a family that had long been connected with the Lutheran Church. His father was a clergyman and his mother the daughter of a clergyman, while his elder brother also took orders, a path that he too might have followed, had it not been for his exceptional musical ability. As a child he showed some precocity, but it was while he was a student at Leipzig University, which he entered in 1701, that a career in music became inevitable. He founded the University Collegium Musicum that Bach was later to direct and in 1703 became musical director of the Leipzig Opera, composing some twenty operas himself. At the same time he involved his fellow-students in a great deal of public performance, to the annoyance of the Thomascantor, Bach's immediate predecessor Kuhnau, who saw his prerogative now endangered.

After Leipzig Telemann went on to become *Kapellmeister* to Count Erdmann II of Promnitz, a nobleman with a taste for French music, and in 1708 moved to Eisenach, following this with a position as director of music to the city of Frankfurt am Main in 1712. There were other offers of employment elsewhere, but it was to Hamburg that he finally moved in 1721, to remain there for the rest of his life.

As a composer Telemann was prolific, providing an enormous body of work, both sacred and secular. This included 1043 church cantatas and 46 settings of the Passions, one for each of the years he was in Hamburg. He continued to involve himself in public performances of opera in Hamburg, arousing some opposition from the city council, his employers. Once he had strengthened his position he took additional responsibility as director of the Hamburg Opera, while active in publishing and selling much of the music that he wrote. Four years Bach's senior, he outlived him by seventeen years, so that by the time of his death Haydn was 35 and Mozart was eleven. His musical style developed with the times, from the characteristically late Baroque to the new *stile galant* exemplified by his godson.

Telemann's *Musique de table* was published in 1733, a collection of music divided into three *Productions*, each one containing an overture with a suite for seven instruments, a quartet, a concerto for seven instruments, a trio, a solo and a conclusion for seven instruments, and advertised as offering a variety of instrumentation. On the title-page where this is announced Telemann declares himself to be *Maître de Chapelle* to Their Highnesses the Duke of Saxe-Eisenach and the Margrave of Bayreuth and Director of Music in Hamburg. Telemann had been appointed to the position of *Kapellmeister von Haus aus* (visiting *Kapellmeister*) to the Duke of Saxe-Eisenach in 1717, with the duty of providing music for the church, *Tafel Music* and the necessary music for solemn occasions.

The appointment confirmed his earlier activity and residence at Eisenach from 1708 until 1712, when he took up his appointment in Frankfurt. In Leipzig, Eisenach and Frankfurt, as subsequently in Hamburg, he was closely involved with the provision and performance of instrumental music. In Hamburg he held regular weekly meetings of the Collegium Musicum, at first in his house and then in the Drillhaus, reviving an institution comparable to that he had founded in Leipzig and worked with in Frankfurt, but which before his arrival had fallen into abeyance.

Telemann's wide reputation by 1733 is witnessed by the list of 206 subscribers to the *Musique de table*. 52 of these came from abroad and included among them musicians of great distinction, such as the French flautist and composer Blavet and, from London, *Mr. Hendel Docteur en Musique*, while German subscribers ranged from members of the nobility to leading figures in the world of music. The work is in the French style. As Telemann explained in a letter to the composer Graun, since there was nothing new to be found in melody, so novelty must be sought in the harmony, an unduly modest assessment of his achievement.

The *Ouverture* to the third part of the *Tafelmusik* is scored for two oboes and strings. The suite starts with a French overture with a repeated slow introduction, marked *Lentement*, that makes appropriate use of dotted rhythms, leading to a lively fugal section. A return to the music of the introduction is followed by a repetition of the fugal section and its sober conclusion. The *Bergerie*, marked *Un peu vivement*, is a lilting pastoral movement, its opening framing two contrasting sections. The mood of the duple-metre third movement is indicated in its cheerful title, *Allégresse*. It has a slower trio section in G minor. *Postillons* makes familiar use of the characteristic octave leap of the post-horn, its opening used to frame intervening contrasting sections. *Flaterie* offers its own contrast in pace to the cheerful following teasing *Badinage*, with its contrasting sections. The *Menuet* also has a G minor trio section that allows variation in texture.

The *Quartet*, in E minor, is scored for flute, violin, cello and continuo. It starts with an *Adagio* in which the cello echoes the opening theme of the flute, while the violin proposes other material that forms part of the contrapuntal interchange between the instruments. In the following *Allegro* the violin offers the subject, to be imitated by the flute and then by the cello. Further points of imitation are explored in subtle contrapuntal interplay. The G major third movement of the quartet, marked *Dolce* interrupts its gentle lilt with moments of curious syncopation, while the final *Allegro* restores the original key of E minor in a conclusion of the expected technical assurance.

The E flat major *Concerto* is scored for two horns, strings and continuo. There is room for contrast in the slower first movement, leading to a cheerful *Allegro*, with its passages for the horns alone and interesting violin figuration. The two sections of the movement, the second starting with an excursion into C minor, are repeated. The C minor slow movement, marked *Grave*, gives the horn-players time to take breath, allowing them principally to mark points of rest for the two violins in their contrapuntal progress. The concerto ends with a hunting gigue, again in two repeated sections.

The D major *Trio* is scored for two flutes and continuo. Its opening *Andante* offers an immediate contrast to the preceding concerto. There is fine interplay between the two flutes in a triple-metre *Allegro,* with a triple division of the beat that prevails through most of the movement. Preliminary chords introduce the B minor *Largo* that takes its sober course, any underlying poignancy quickly dispelled in the final D major *Vivace*, in which the second flute enters in imitation of the first.

The *Solo Sonata* is in G minor and scored for oboe

with bassoon and harpsichord *continuo*. The first movement has the rhythm of a *Siciliano* and is followed by a finely crafted *Presto*, to which a 3/8 G major *Tempo giusto* serves as a foil, before the G minor *Presto* is repeated. There is a short B flat major *Andante* aria and the sonata ends with a bipartite G minor *Allegro*.

Telemann ends the whole work with a *Furioso* movement, a *Conclusion* scored for the two oboes, strings and continuo of the opening *Ouverture*. The initial figuration suggests a Vivaldi storm at sea, going on to find room for contrapuntal exchange between the instruments in a movement that restores the original key, makes reference to the opening of the work and provides a triumphant close to music of remarkable variety within its chosen forms.

The Orchestra of the Golden Age

In 1995 the Orchestra of the Golden Age made its critically acclaimed début recording of music by Henry Purcell for Naxos. This marked the rapid development of the ensemble, since its first concerts in 1992. Based in Manchester, it was formed by the cellist Robert Glenton to bring performance on original instruments to a wider audience and quickly established a reputation for itself beyond the boundaries of its home-town. The orchestra has recorded for the BBC and appeared at the Flanders Early Music Festival, part of a schedule that brings other appearances overseas. A generous award by the Arts Council of England National Lottery Arts Fund has made possible further acquisitions to augment the orchestra's existing collection of original instruments.

Violin I Anne Schuman
Violin II Julia Bishop
Violin III Joanna Parker

Cello Robert Glenton

Flute I Edwina Smith
Flute II Felicity Bryson

Oboe I Heather Foxwell
Oboe II Heather Kershaw

Bassoon Christopher Robson

Horn I Roger Montgomery
Horn II Gavin Edwards

Trumpet David Blackadder

Harpsichord Bernard Robertson

Robert Glenton

The cellist Robert Glenton is a musician of some versatility, his activities having ranged from leading, on trumpet, his own jazz band to the performance of chamber music at Windsor Castle, from playing with Frank Sinatra and the Count Basie Orchestra to appearance as soloist in Elgar's *Cello Concerto*. He won early distinction as a student cellist at the London Royal Academy of Music, subsequently working as a soloist and chamber-music player, with a period spent in New Zealand and Australia and in conducting-studies in Vienna. Since his return to Britain, he has devoted his time principally to original instrument performance and the creation of the Orchestra of the Golden Age.

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STEREO

DDD

Georg Philipp
TELEMANN
(1681-1767)

Playing Time 73:44

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Musique de Table (Tafelmusik) Part III

Overture (Suite) in B flat major 25:37

1	Ouverture	9:10
2	Bergerie	2:54
3	Allégresse, vite	2:47
4	Postillons	2:15
5	Flaterie	2:54
6	Badinage	2:46
7	Menuet	2:50

Quartet in E minor 8:57

8	Adagio	2:04
9	Allegro	2:16
10	Dolce	2:26
11	Allegro	2:09

Concerto in E flat major for two horns and strings 15:59

12	Maestoso	3:16
13	Allegro	4:57
14	Grave	2:47
15	Vivace	4:57

Trio in D major 9:02

16	Andante	2:08
17	Allegro	2:07
18	Grave – Largo – Grave	2:41
19	Vivace	2:05

Solo sonata in G minor for oboe and continuo 11:39

20	Largo	2:28
21	Presto – Tempo giusto	4:51
22	Andante	1:15
23	Allegro	3:00

Conclusion in B flat major

24	Allegro – Adagio – Allegro	2:00

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Producer and Engineer: Chris Craker
Music Notes: Keith Anderson

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